

10/661,687
August 8th, 2005
Reply to Office Action of 05/06/2005

Via Facsimile

Remarks

This amendment is in response to the May 6th, 2005 Office Action. Support of the above amendments can be found, for example, in Figs. 4 and the 5 series. Applicant respectfully traverses Examiner's rejections of claims 1-12 in light of the above amendments and the following remarks:

Rejection of claims 1-6 under 35 USC § 102(b) by Johnson

Unlike in Johnson, Applicant's invention has a protruding surface along the entire perimeter of the block, which is now more accurately called out by the above amendments to the independent claims.

Johnson's protrusion is actually just a relic of the manufacturing process, and Johnson teaches away from it being a necessity (see lines 45-46 of column 4). Further, unlike in Applicant's claim 2, the protrusion extends from the top of the block, and not the middle. Although middle can be somewhat subjective, thus Applicant has also amended claim 2 for further clarity.

In regards to claim 3, Applicants "substantially rectangular step-up region" is not the same as Johnson's. Although taken by itself the difference might not be clear, taken in light of the amendments to claim 1 and 2 Applicant believes that this difference has been sufficiently called out.

In regards to claims 4-6, Applicant does not believe that Johnson teaches these limitations.

Rejection of claims 7-9 and 12 under 35 USC § 102(b) by Kobayashi

Similarly to claim 1, the amendment to claim 7 clarifies that the protrusion from the block is along the entire perimeter, and not just at a single point as taught by Kobayashi. Claims 8-9 follow the above arguments of claims 2-3.

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In regards to claim 12, the creepage path of Kobayashi does not appear to be at least 5 times the width.

Rejection of claims 10-11 under 35 USC § 103(a) Kobayashi and Johnson

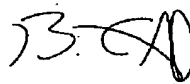
In regards to claim 10, after diagramming the description of the creepage path, applicant does not obtain the creepage paths as taught by Kobayashi or Johnson, alone or in combination. Since claim 10 is dependant, applicant believes that the above arguments are suffice to overcome the rejection, however the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to further discuss how the creepage path is diagrammed and where the Examiner and Applicant might differ in interpretation.

In regards to claim 11, Applicant does not see the rounding of the edges on the protrusion/elongated surface that the Examiner is referring to, and invites the Examiner to discuss as mentioned in claim 10.

In view of the above amendments, remarks and appended affidavit, applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
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by



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